

Week Ending Friday, October 8, 2004

**Remarks in Manchester,  
New Hampshire**

*October 1, 2004*

**The President.** Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all coming. Thanks. It's great to be back in the great State of New Hampshire.

So guess what happened? We pulled up in our entourage, and I opened the door. I come bounding in the tent, and Mother's there checking up on me. They said—you know, sometimes they say I get a little too blunt, reminds me of the time a woman in Texas said, "Well, you got your daddy's eyes and your mother's mouth." [Laughter] I love you, Mom. Thanks for coming.

I'm keeping really good company up here on the stage. First, I'm proud to be standing with your great United States Senator, Judd Gregg. He's as solid as the granite in this State. I know you're going to send him back for 6 more years.

And I'm proud to be in New Hampshire with John McCain. What a fine American he is and a good friend. He told me a little something about New Hampshire politics—in case you forgot. [Laughter] I didn't. I picked up on the lessons and carried the State of New Hampshire in 2000, and with your help, we'll carry it again in 2004.

We had a great debate last night. It highlighted some fundamental differences between my opponent and me, differences I believe are crucial to our Nation's national security. First of all, there's a big difference when it comes to supporting our troops in harm's way. When America puts our troops in combat, I believe they deserve the best training, the best equipment, the full support of our Government. Last night my opponent said our troops deserve better. They certainly deserve better than they got from Senator Kerry when he voted to send them to war, then voting—voted against funding our troops in combat.

**Audience members.** Boo-o-o!

**The President.** You may remember his quote when they asked him about his vote. He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, right before I voted against it." [Laughter] Not a lot of people in New Hampshire talk that way. Last night he said he had made a mistake in how he talked about that vote. I don't know if you remember that part of the debate or not. I certainly do. But the mistake wasn't what Senator Kerry said. The mistake was what Senator Kerry did.

During the course of this campaign, they kept asking him to explain the vote. He said the famous quote. Then he went on and said he was proud of his vote. He said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." And earlier this week he gave yet another explanation of his vote. He said, "Well, it was a protest vote." [Laughter] Exactly what he said, "protest vote."

**Audience members.** Boo-o-o!

**The President.** When we put American troops in harm's way, they certainly deserve better than to have a candidate for President use them as a protest.

Last night was very revealing. He continued his pattern of confusing contradictions. After voting for the war, after saying my decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision, he now said it was all a mistake. But asked a logical question, "Does that mean our troops are dying for a mistake," he said, "No." You can't have it both ways. You can't say it's a mistake and not a mistake. You can't be for getting rid of Saddam Hussein when things look good and against it when times are difficult. You can't claim terrorists are pouring across the border into Iraq yet, at the same time, try to claim that Iraq is somehow a diversion from the war on terror. The American President must speak clearly, and when he speaks, must mean what he says.